BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL

FOUR MOTHERS (12A)

Director: Darren Thornton
Starring: James McArdle, Fionnula Flanagan, Niamh Cusack, Dearbhla Molloy
Ireland, 2024, 1 hour 29 minutes, English

In this fun and uplifting Irish comedy-drama, veteran actress Fiona Flanagan (*The Others, Waking Ned Devine*) plays Alma, the mother of novelist Edward (James McArdle). When Edward's three friends decide they want to go on holiday, they each leave their own mothers with Edward and Alma.

This personal tribute to middle-aged Irish gay men and their working-class matriarchs comes from brothers Darren and Colin Thornton. It is a loose remake of Italian film *Mid-August Lunch*, with a "*maturity that is born from experience. There are laughs to be had, but this story of ageing and assertiveness, transitions and limitations, has a trace-line of authenticity and sadness too*" (Screen Daily).

Speaking of the relationship between parents and gay children, Colin Thornton (who is gay), told Attitude that the "*intensity*" of coming out, an experience that can be quite fraught, can result in a "*kind of healing…later on in life, form[ing] a tight bond between a mother and a gay son, that I think is quite different to the bond that a mother has with her straight son.*"

The "*human detail and honesty of the writing*" (Variety) shine, in adorably similar — and different — ways between the groups of gay men and their mothers. The varying views on life, whether that be queerness, parenting or marriage, are presented in a thoughtful and loving way.

Preview courtesy of BFI

Notes compiled by Sarah Nicol (Community Engagement Coordinator)

If you like **FOUR MOTHERS**, you may enjoy:

SMALL THINGS LIKE THESE (12A) Oscar winner Cillian Murphy (*Oppenheimer*) delivers another outstanding performance in this piercing drama that echoes the quiet tension and live emotion of Claire Keegan's best-selling novella.

THE SUMMER WITH CARMEN (18) In this sexy, sun-drenched comedy, best friends Demos and Nikitas are about to embark on the most meta movie adventure ever.